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Note by the Secretary-General

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1. Academy for Future Science

(Special; 2003)

While the broad aims and work of The Academy For Future Science continues according to its 2002 submission, some of the highlights of our work has expanded where the Academy has helped initiate an exchange with other NGOs working in community building in Maseru, Lesotho. Our work continues to include an outreach program in Brazil, where we have supported an educational program for the Xavante Indians of Mato Grosso, Brazil (2003-2006). We have also provided them with sewing machines and technology for rice production as well as computer training in an effort to help with primary education and eradicate poverty according to the Millennium Development Goals. Throughout 2003-2006, The Academy's global outreach has also focused on educational forums in various countries of the world such as Mexico, Chile, Brazil where we have worked to help instruct teachers and educators in new information sciences that are available in support of the Information Society according to the UN Economic and Social Council's commitment to capacity building through information resources.

The Academy For Future Science has sent representatives to all the Committee for Sustainable Development (CDS) sessions in New York since 2001. Since the Academy had participated in the WSSD in Johannesburg in 2002, as well as presented a paper on medical advances on UN TV (August 2002), it continued its participation at CSD-11 (2003) where we supported the European Union's proposal of a ten-year program of work on sustainable production and consumption, focusing on consumer pricing, science and technology, and greater access to information. At CSD-12 (2004) we undertook to evaluate the progress of implementation of Agenda 21. Here we were particularly interested in the partnership relationships within the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP) and how to achieve the Millennial Development Goals on Water and Sanitation organized by the UN-HABITAT. Our work at CSD-13 (2005) focused on practical measures and options to expedite implementation of commitments in water sanitation and water settlements contained in Agenda 21. We also supported Chair John Ashe who spoke about incorporating the MDGs as a key part of the work of the CSD. In CSD-14 (2006) we discussed the lack of funding that seemed to be present in many of the sustainable development projects, and looked also to incorporate information from the International Conference for Financing and Development, connecting also with various partnerships in our area of expertise, while returning to work with the REEEP (Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership) and having some discussions with the Global Village Energy Partnership (GVEP). The Academy reviewed some of the new science technologies available in partnerships, especially in applications of technology in India and Canada. At all of the CSD conferences listed above, we participated in NGO forums and working groups, as well as the larger committee meetings held by UN leaders.

In addition, The Academy For Future Science sent two delegates to the UN World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), Geneva, 8-12 December 2003 (including consultation meetings). We participated with other groups in the Southern Working Group that included members from Cameroon, South Africa, India and Fiji. The working group recognized the need for training in high technology especially for African and certain Asian NGOs in order to play a greater role in the global information revolution and looked at ways of raising finances for this purpose. It was determined that

improvements were needed in the NGOs abilities to achieved a more practical field collaboration and technical networking, in part, because of the limited communications amongst NGOs. It was decided NGOs needed to disseminate and share their experiences to a greater degree. It was also noted in dialogue with Asian NGOs, that civil society in Asia is relatively newer than that of Africa. Both regions delegates felt there has to be more capacity building, and that it was important to work together for these purposes.

At the WSIS, we also encouraged ways to strengthen civil society that would define a better North-South relationship by providing southern hemispheric countries with more information and democratic insights and to highlight leadership roles and models as used in India and South Africa. There were discussions with UNEP leaders, and how ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) could benefit African countries. One of the ideas discussed was the establishment of a special fund for the development of IT development in countries of the South (e.g., Digital Solitary Fund). The conclusion of our working group and many leaders speaking at the Conference was that a greater degree of cooperation among NGOs, educational institutes, government leaders and programs, both in the North and South, were paramount if technological advances were going to be of benefit. Our working group provided the UN leadership with several recommendations. Among them was the recommendation to involve more Southern NGOs and to find financial solutions to ensure their participation. We felt it was important to encourage national governments to be more sensitive to civil society organizations' involvement in the policy-making process. Therefore, we applauded the UN for bringing together such individuals to allow a greater communications process to begin.

Two of our representatives also attended a follow-up of the WSIS which took place in New York (February 2004) in conjunction with the International Council for Caring Communities. Here we heard and had the chance to meet with H.F. Mr. Bob Jalango who is Chairman of the ECOSOC Working Group on Informatics Permanent Representative of Kenya to the UN who gave an outstanding presentation on the need for the building of the Information Society throughout Africa.

The Academy was represented at the Third Session of the World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology which took place in Rio (1-4 December 2003). The main discussion here centered on ethics and had six basic focuses. The panel we participated in was the Panel on the Ethics of Fresh Water. There was much discussion on the use of fresh water in desert and arid places, especially in Africa where there is creeping desert conditions in the North and problems of water pollution and waste due to the lack of proper water and health infrastructure in many of the larger sub-Sahara African cities. It was discussed that a better understanding of human rights, new hands-on technology, and a dialogue on ethics would benefit Central African nations helping their respective societies gaining access to clean water.

The Academy was represented by a judge who is also a professor teaching Space Law from Brazil, who attended the UN/Brazil workshop on Space Law "Disseminating and developing international and national space law: the Latin American and Caribbean Perspective" in Rio de Janeiro (22-25 November 2004). The workshop observed that enacting national space legislation was one of many mechanisms to authorize and continue to supervise space activities of non-governmental entities. Our representative took the information back to his university to report on these findings and continues to incorporate this knowledge in various ways.

We have also attended some of the United Nations Forest Forums (UNFF), mainly the larger committee meetings hosted by UN leaders. For UNFF-6 (2006), we applauded Jacques Andoh Alle, Minister of the Environment, Water and Forest, Côte d'Ivoire, who made a presentation on his national efforts to strengthen his country's forests and increase partnerships with NGOs. UNFF-5 (2005) looked at ways to increase forest areas and reduce poverty in areas of forest communities. Parts of South Africa and Lesotho both have areas of forests communities with limited electricity and clean water and we found the information most helpful for our work.

Amongst the other meetings in New York that our representatives attended were: the UN Habitat Meeting: "Urban Governance Tools to Support Sustainable Urbanization" (21 April 2004); UN Habitat Meeting: Unheard Voices of Woman at CSD12" (26 April 2004); Post-summit Meetings with South African Government (ANC on the Role of Alternatives to Nuclear Energy (Dec. 2003); and The Forty-ninth Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW, UN NYC, 28 Feb. to 11 March 2005).

The Academy For Future Science is currently a member of CONGO and works with the Committee for Spiritual Values and Global Concerns (CSVGC) which meets regularly in New York. The Academy helped sponsor in conjunction with the CSVGS the Spirit of the United Nations: Markings for the Future (On the Occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the UN (6 November 2005). The Academy For Future Science also provided a speaker to discuss important issues on "Water and the Value of Bio-ethics" at the Earth Values Caucus (May 2004). In Austria, we had a representative attend The Austria/European Space Agency (ESA), "Symposium on Water for the World; Space Security for Water Management", (Graz, Austria, 13-16 September 2004).

The Academy also sent two participants to the Rwandan Remembrance Trusteeship at the United Nations in April 2005, New York, where testimonies were heard on the need for cooperation amongst African cultures in terms of purpose/mission, current reality, and reconciliation. In all, we feel the UN-ECOSOC programs have enhanced our work of educational outreach and our abilities to help improve on several of the MDGs.

2. All India Women's Education Fund Association

(Special; 1999)

In 1929 the All India Women's Education Fund Association (AIWEFA) was set up to advance the education of women since formal education was recognized as the catalytic agent for social change.

In 1932 with the establishment of the country's first Home Science College, Lady Irwin College, AIWEFA sought to remodel women's education by investing it with a scientific temper. Through the College, AIWEFA sought to guide and implement national policy decisions on around villages of Delhi, through education, health and sanitation.

Since 1995 in an effort towards mainstreaming women in the developmental process AIWEFA included focus on gender issues and urgent social action through field projects, seminars and workshops.

In 1999 AIWEFA was granted ECOSOC status (a Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations). In 2003 AIWEFA accepted the nodal NGO status in the United Nations Informal Regional Network of NGOs (UN NGO IRENE).

AIWEFA continues its field projects that emphasize literacy development, including providing extra support for children with less aptitude for education; imparting skills in computers, tailoring, midwifery, arts and crafts, beauty treatment; capacity building through vocational training and entrepreneurship workshops, imparting best practices in health and nutrition; developing and popularizing the use of microcredit facilities among Self Help Groups; planting model nurseries for improved and sustainable agricultural practices; and identification and encouragement of local talent in sports and other areas.

AIWEFA is networking with NGOs for joint action; participating in working relationships with the Government sector; invoking corporate and bi-lateral agency support towards projects and to discharge corporate social responsibility initiatives for sustainable development.

In 2004-05 AIWEFA celebrated its Platinum Jubilee and dedicated its year-long special programmes towards this event.

Report of AIWEFA activities 2003-2006 specifically as regards AIWEFA support to the work of the United Nations.

2003 - 06

International Networking:

2003

- AIWEFA representation at the High Level Segment Meeting in Geneva where a presentation on AIWEFA's activities was screened.
- As Charter Founder Member of India Alliance for Child rights (IACR) presented the NGO response on the Government of India Child Rights Report to the Child Rights Committee at Geneva.
- AIWEFA was designated Regional Coordinator for the UN NGO IRENE for India by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations.
- Representation at Geneva for "International Day of Disabled Persons"; CONGO General Assembly on "Inclusive Global Governance: Challenge and Opportunities for CONGO in partnership with the U.N."; and World Summit on Information Society (WSIS).
- Presentations: Pretoria, South Africa—Food grain situation in India and Medicinal Herbs.

Colombo, Sri Lanka—Medicinal Herbs.

Manila, Philippines--Appropriate Technologies for water.

2004

- Membership for CONGO.
- International Women's Day Address at Laos organized by the U.N. System.

- Presentation of the case of the Indian Women at the 49th. Session of the Commission on the Status of Women.
- Representation at Islamabad, Pakistan at the conference on Gender Mainstreaming and MDGs.
- Representation at Lalitpur, Nepal, at the Beyond Beijing Consultation on the Girl Child. Concluding Remarks from India presented.
- AIWEFA Geneva Representative acknowledged by Ms. Conchita Poncini, President, Geneva NGO Commission on the Status of Women for effectively coordinating the organization of the Forum.

2005

AIWEFA appointment as one of four Rapporteurs for the NGO IRENE meeting at Tunisia.

2006

- Presentation at Beijing at Round Table and Launch of NGO IRENE/Asia-Pacific Conference on "Creating an environment at National and International levels conducive to generating full and productive employment for all and its impact on sustainable development".

2003-06

National Networking:

2003

- Visit of Senior Interregional Advisor in governance, public administration training, Department of Economic and Social Affairs and Project Coordinator UN-NGO-IRENE to provide assistance to NGOs, strengthen their contribution to the work of ECOSOC in implementing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in India. Field visit to AIWEFA's rural project site—Daboda, Haryana and meet with NGOs organized jointly by UNIFEM and AIWEFA.
- AIWEFA instituted the Nina Sibal Award for an NGO working on disability and Stree Shakti for individuals working on Women's Economic Empowerment through Education.
- Hosting of a 3 day seminar 'Building Partnerships towards achieving MDGs.
- Six regional meetings coordinated with the help of networking partners at Amritsar, Bhuvaneshwar, Guwahati, Kolkata, Trivandrum and Coimbatore on "Challenge to Development -Survival of Girl Child", "Child Marriage in Kerala" and SHGs.
- Bhopal workshop on "Women Empowerment and promotion of SHG".
- To mark SAARC Day of the Girl Child hosted a Round Table Panel Discussion "The childhood of the Girl Child : Doorway to Development or Deprivation".
- Representation at the South Asia Regional Conference on "Education: The right of every Girl and Boy".

Field work:

- Adoption of three villages in Haryana state towards holistic development. Computer literacy , Tailoring and Embroidery training introduced.
- Computer Training amongst primary level Government school children.

2004

- Release of updated second edition NGO directory "On Common Ground" in Hindi and English.
- Presentation to the Parliamentary Standing Committee of the Ministry of Human Resource and Development on "Self Help Groups and Micro Credit".

Field Work:

- Ongoing developmental input in villages. Activities include formation of SHGs, youth clubs, medical camps, eye camps, nutrition workshops, orientation towards water conservation, sanitation and training programmes for literacy, legal awareness and nutrition.
- Computer literacy program in Laxmi Nagar, New Delhi.
- Computer training in Government schools.

2005

- Shadow Round Table Meet to coincide with the 48th session of the United Nations NGO Commission on the Status of Women to commemorate Women's Day.
- UNICEF sponsorship to receive training in child related rural and urban mapping.
- AIWEFA's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations—two day national seminar/workshop on MDGs and Exhibition on use of science and technology towards "Drudgery Reduction in Housework".
- Representation at the launch of the U.N. Millennium Project Report by Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs.

Field Work:

- Training in Computer literacy, Tailoring and Embroidery, Tree Plantation in villages.
- Computer, Beauty culture and Self Defense Training, Nutrition workshops at New Delhi.

2006

- Presentation to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Child Marriage Bill.
- SAARC Day of Girl Child for the "Dignity of Daughters ending Child Marriages in India" organized by networking partner India alliance for Child Rights.
- Lobbying for action against "Domestic Violence".
- Education Media: "Strategic Role in Early Childhood Development".

- Participation in the "Think Tank" meeting for the preparation of the 11th Five year plan of the Planning Commission.

Field Work

- Embroidery and Tailoring classes in Pataudi, Daboda and Tirpari.
- Computer Course, Nutrition Training, Civil Defence Training, Beautician Course in Delhi.
- Model Nursery Plantation and economic empowerment in rural areas through a project supported by FAO.

3. International Association for Religious Freedom

(General; 1995)

PART I. Introduction

i. Aims and purpose of the Organization

An association of 'liberal religionists' now over a century old, the IARF through the period 1998-2002 has pursued programmes in accordance with its 2001-2007 Strategic Plan, which - based on Article 18 of the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights - committed the organization to work with groups from different religious traditions or beliefs (normally those which share its liberal values) toward freedom from oppressive discrimination by state or social institutions on the grounds of religion or belief, on behalf of communities suffering from religious persecution or discrimination, toward a goal of mutual understanding, respect and the promotion of harmony - or at least tolerance - between communities or individuals of different religions or beliefs. Programmes were therefore undertaken in the areas of:- human rights education in countries afflicted by religion-based intolerance; young adult leadership development; policy materials development for intra-(religious) group accountability.

At the end of 2006, IARF had 12 national chapters (increased since 1998-2002 report) and 66 active member groups (decreased), and an estimated 1,500 individual members across 12 countries (stable). Activities were co-ordinated from four major regional offices - South Asia, Japan, Europe (Budapest) and the Philippines - managed by a secretariat in Oxford, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Funding continues to come from member groups, with in addition a large three-year project grant from the Netherlands government, and sundry moneys for completion of a Rockefeller Foundation-funded project begun in the previous report period (1998-2002).

ii. Changes that impacted our scope / orientation / programmes

Nil

PART II. Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations

i. Participation in the work of the Economic and Social council / subsidiaries / major conferences / other UN activities

IARF focus has remained on the issue of freedom of religion or belief and human rights education. IARF was represented at the 59th and 60th sessions of the Commission on Human Rights in 2003 and 2004, and on both occasions, in its capacity as Secretary of the NGO Committee on Freedom of Religion or Belief, organized Hearings with the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Prof Abdelfattah Amor; these hearings were well attended and minuted by IARF for wide circulation. IARF was also represented at the last 61st Session of the Commission on Human Rights, and once again arranged a Hearing with the Special Rapporteur, now Ms Asma Jahangir. At all three sessions IARF drafted, facilitated and presented joint oral statements together with a dozen other NGOs. For the new Human Rights Council in 2006 IARF prepared and attracted 20 further signatories for a written statement which emphasized the importance of the role of the Special Rapporteur.

The organization's quadrennial World Congress was held in Taiwan Province of China, attracting over 300 delegates embracing 12 different belief affiliations. The organization also sent delegates to the Parliament of the World's Religions 2004 in Barcelona, Spain, where they mounted an exhibition on global religious freedom situations, and gave two presentations.

ii. Cooperation with UN bodies or specialised agencies, in the field or at headquarters

The representative of IARF prepared in 2003 an unofficial 30-page translation and executive summary of the 80-page study by the Special Rapporteur on the Status of Women in the light of Religion and Culture; in the absence of an official translation the unofficial translation and summary are still being referred to (as recently as the 4th Session of the Human Rights Council in March 2007). The representative of IARF was invited to numerous consultations with NGOs in the process of designing and launching the new Human Rights Council. IARF also provided materials in the form of videos and texts to the resource centre in the Palais Wilson, Geneva, of the newly established Programme for Human Rights Education. IARF was among other NGOs which provided materials and made comments (a) in the preparation and realization of the World Summit on the Information Society; and (b) at the presentation to NGOs in Geneva in 2006 of the High Level Group on the Alliance of Civilizations; on both occasions IARF emphasized the need for all religions to be involved in civil society engagement.

iii. Initiatives in support of the Millennium Development Goals

The organization has contributed indirectly to the MDGs; while its aims are broadly in agreement with socio-economic developmentalism, since 2001 they have been primarily and specifically to educate in respect of the UDHR's Article 18, and thereby to change mindsets that stand in the way of the broader societal stability and harmony that is a precondition of the MDGs.

2. Universal Primary Education: IARF during 2003 to 2005 followed up the recommendations of the UN "International Consultative Conference on School Education in Relation with Freedom of Religion or Belief, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination" (held in Madrid in 2001) with consultations in South Africa (January 2004) and Costa Rica (November 2004) (having already held similar meetings in Switzerland and India in 2002).

3. Gender Equality: Reference has already been made to IARF focus on the status of women in the light of religion and culture; the study materials provided by IARF have been widely used at many levels and on many continents.

8. Global Partnership for Development: IARF has been elected since 2003 to the Board of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Status with ECOSOC (CONGO) and has taken part in regular Board Meetings in New York, Geneva and Vienna where the emphasis is put on multi-disciplinary and practical co-operation by NGOs among themselves and with all UN agencies, not least in promoting relevant MDGs.

iv. Activities in support of Global Principles

The IARF's major project has been in collaboration with the New York-based NGO People's Decade for Human Rights Education (PDHRE), and funded by the Dutch government's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (€220,000 over 3 years), to develop and propagate in several countries a package of training materials on human rights related to religious freedom. The two organizations jointly identified a lack of appropriate, culturally sensitive, and easy-to-use 'teaching tools' for unrolling to grassroots communities an awareness of the existence and purpose of the U.N.'s benchmark 1981 document, 'Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.' The goal was to create modern, experience-based audiovisual and written materials which effectively communicate to foster discussion around religious freedom as deriving from the human rights framework. IARF has distributed these training materials (four video dramas and a manual, with questionnaires, etc.) through programmes run by its chapter and member organization networks within selected communities in Bangladesh, India and the Philippines, and also through its Young Adult leadership.

Young Adult leadership development has continued, with secretariat-organized trainings and regional office-organized seminars in the Philippines in 2003, and the Philippines, India, Hungary, and Japan & the United States of America in 2004. Until end-2003 the organization produced a conspectus of the global situation for religious freedom, in the form of short reports on affected regions, posted quarterly on our website.

The final document of a Rockefeller Foundation-funded project (renamed 'An Affirmation of Religious Freedom & Responsibility') was printed and distributed through our networks, toward the development of an ethical consensus, eventually a code, to which religious groupings will subscribe regarding the treatment of their own members. It is envisaged this work will contribute toward the goals of the UN's 1981 'Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.'

4. International Social Service

(Special; 1947)

I. INTRODUCTION

i. Aims and purposes

Founded in 1924, International Social Service (ISS) is an international non-governmental organization dedicated to helping individuals and families with personal or social problems resulting from migration and international movement. Its nineteen national Branches and Affiliated Bureaus and

Correspondents in over 140 countries facilitate communication between social services to resolve these problems. ISS provides help without political, racial, religious or national discrimination.

ii. Changes during the period under review

From 2003 to 2006, one Branch and one Affiliated Bureau left the organization : Argentina and Finland. Two new Branches were created: Belgium and the Philippines.

Additional sources of funding were obtained through international projects related to the protection of children without parental care, in particular from UNICEF.

II. CONTRIBUTION OF THE ORGANIZATION TO THE WORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS

i. Participation in the work of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies and/or major conferences and other United Nations meetings

ECOSOC

- Meetings of the Economic and Social Council in 2003 and 2005
- Regular annual sessions 2003-2006 of
- Commission on Social Development
- Commission on the Status of Women
- Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations
- Department of Public Information Annual NGO Conference
- 10 Year Review of the implementation of the Copenhagen Conference and Programme of Action and the outcome of the 24th Special Session of the General Assembly – February 2005
- Beijing + 10 Conference, 49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women – February 2005
- High level Meetings on AIDS, June 2005 and June 2006
- Informal Hearings of the General Assembly with Non-Governmental Organizations, Civil Society and the Private Sector, June 2005
- Informal Hearings of the General Assembly with Non-Governmental Organizations, Civil Society and the Private Sector on International Migration and Development in June 2006
- High level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, September 2006

From 2002 to 2006, Mrs. Rosalind Harris, ISS Representative to the United Nations, chaired the NGO Alliance on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. This Committee took an active role in preparing NGO ancillary meetings of the 11th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice held in Bangkok in April 2005. These included sessions on trafficking in women and children.

UNHCR

- UNHCR EXCOM, September 2003.

- Briefing session for NGOs on the assistance provided by UNHCR to the countries affected by the 26 December 2004 tsunami, 10 February 2005.

- UNHCR Roundtable on Separated Children, Toronto, November 7, 2005. Ms. Aggie Casselman, Director of ISS Canada presented a paper on "Return Considerations: Best Practices".

UNICEF

- Round Table on "Challenges of the Child Protection System Reforms in the CEE/CIS", Geneva, 26-27 October 2005.

- UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Consultation on Violence against Children, Bangkok, Thailand, 14-16 June 2005. Dr. Marie Connolly, Chief Social Worker of New Zealand Child, Youth and Family Service and Director of ISS Affiliated Bureau in New Zealand attended the meeting.

- Workshop on Social Work and Child Protection, organized in Yangon, Myanmar, by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and UNICEF Myanmar, 8-10 November 2005. A paper was presented by Vincent Faber, Secretary-General.

Human Rights Commission

- The International Reference Centre for the Rights of Children Deprived of their Family (ISS/IRC), operated by ISS, participated regularly in the sessions of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

- Mr. Sylvain Vité, Deputy Coordinator of ISS/IRC, participated as speaker in the Human Rights Commission (session on NGO activities) in April 2005. On this occasion UNICEF/ISS's call for the adoption of UN Guidelines on the Protection of Children without Parental Care was presented during the plenary session of the Commission.

UNESCO

ISS South Africa participated in an UNESCO Workshop on trans-border Trafficking in Africa, Pretoria, 22 November 2005.

ii. Cooperation with United Nations bodies and/or specialized agencies in the field and/or at Headquarters

Meetings, seminars organized with UN participation

- ISS training seminar on unaccompanied and separated minors, Athens, 25-26 May 2003, with UNHCR participation.

- ISS Italy participated in the "World Refugee Day" organized by UNHCR and the municipality of Rome in 2004 and 2006.

- ISS Portugal participated in the VI International Congress organized by the Portuguese Refugees Council, with the cooperation of UNHCR, on "The Enlargement of the European Union and Protection for the Refugees", Lisbon, 24-25 November 2004.

- In 2005 ISS Switzerland organized a national hearing on children's rights in Switzerland where 10 priorities for the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child were presented.

- In 2005 ISS Australia developed a training module on United Nations and Hague Conventions with implications for working with children. This training is being offered to Government Departments and child welfare service providers.

- ISS Japan has been commissioned by UNHCR to provide assistance to asylum seekers and recognized refugees. A report is submitted to UNHCR twice a year.

- The ISS Affiliated Bureau in South Africa represented the Department of Social Development in an ILO funded project involving the development and implementation of a Child Labour Action Plan for South Africa. The involvement of the ISS unit has been ongoing since 2004.

- In 2003-2004, a program on the provision of homes for elderly people and refugees in Serbia was implemented by ISS Switzerland in cooperation with UNHCR and the Swiss federal government.

- In 2003-2004 a foster placement and training program for children born out of wedlock in Tunisia was conducted by ISS Switzerland in cooperation with UNICEF and INEP.

- The United States of America Branch has a leading role in the United States Campaign to Ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Campaign membership is supported by ISS USA through a dedicated website www.childrightscampaign.org. ISS USA has chaired the planning committee for the national Summit for the Convention on the Rights of the Child: Mobilizing Communities for Ratification, held on 18-20 May 2006 in Washington, D.C.

5. United States Committee for UNIFEM

(Special; 1999)

PART I

Chartered in 1983, the United States Committee for UNIFEM (UNIFEM/USA), one of 16 National Committees worldwide, is committed to generating public awareness and expanding financial support within the United States of America for UNIFEM (United Nations Fund for Women). While the organization's aims and purposes remain as described in the submission of 1997, significant changes occurred due to total new leadership of UNIFEM/USA in June 1999. A gradual and difficult process of restructuring began in order to modernize and professionalize the management of the organization. In 2001, we succeeded in adopting the revised Bylaws which now govern the business of the organization. In January 2002, we created a document on Policies and Procedures. By 2003, the National Board of Directors was reduced to 24 members as planned, and we had an Action Plan. Our work is accomplished through the National Board of Directors helped by local Chapters and an Advisory Council of national leaders. With modern technology and the help of a talented graphic designer and printing company, our publications are now in keeping with other professional organizations, strengthening our outreach considerably. Membership has increased gradually, and strong Chapters are now in California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, New York, and Washington, D.C. with additional members in Connecticut where a new Chapter is forming. Our mailing list includes over 3000 people in the United States who receive quarterly newsletters and periodic email updates about UNIFEM and the United Nations in general. In addition, we now have a professional website

which was thoroughly modernized in 2006. Our funding comes from membership dues and the percentage which we are permitted to keep from funds raised for UNIFEM through public events and private contributions from United States citizens. This is in accordance with a Recognition Agreement with UNIFEM. According to the agreement between UNIFEM and all National Committees, finalized in September 2002, we are required to raise a minimum of $50,000 each year for UNIFEM. In addition, we must provide the Executive Director of UNIFEM with an annual report concerning our proposed budget, a copy of our annual audit, our activities and a list of Officers and Board Members for the coming year. Another significant change is that we have stronger affiliations with the 15 other National Committees and have formed a Global Coalition in order to streamline our efforts to better engage with our own Governments and Civil Society, to raise more funds for the Trust Fund to Eliminate Violence Against Women and to study how to strengthen our coalition to improve our work together. It was the President of UNIFEM/USA who initiated this endeavor. In addition, we have created or sustained alliances with organizations in the United States which augment and increase our effectiveness, such as the National Council of Women's Organizations, the United Nations Association Council of Organizations, Women Impacting Public Policy and other NGOs with consultative status.

PART II

UNIFEM/USA continues to support UNIFEM projects that promote women's economic empowerment, leadership and the elimination of violence against women and girls; informs elected officials about women's issues and engages their support for UNIFEM programs; promotes events and campaigns that educate the public about human rights issues affecting all women; raises funds for UNIFEM through public events and private contributions; and alerts members about issues of critical concern for the advancement of women and possibilities for action (e.g., a detailed fact sheet concerning the Millennium Development Goals presented at a special event in Washington, D.C. and then sent to all of our mailing list). Press Releases on United Nations Reform were sent to keep our members and others better informed. Networking with other nongovernmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council is accomplished by membership in the NGO Committee on the Status of Women, the NGO Committee on UNIFEM, the NGO Committee on Migration, the Council of Organizations of United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA/USA) and by attending the annual Department of Public Information (DPI) Conferences in September and meetings of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March. UNIFEM/USA has participated in United Nations conferences as observers and participants in side events in order to increase our understanding of the work of the United Nations and to network with other NGOs. UNIFEM/USA hosts an annual luncheon for 200 people at the United Nations during the meetings of the CSW. Prior to the meetings of the CSW, we have submitted written statements (E/CN.6/2006/NGO/25) or have signed on with those of other NGOs.

Our representatives have attended the following CSW meetings in New York City in this reporting period: 47th Session: 3–14 March 2003 focusing on 1) participation and access to women to the media and 2) women's human rights and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls; 48th Session: 1-12 March 2004 focusing on 1) the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality and 2) women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peace-building; 49th Session: 28 February–11 March 2005 focusing on

1) a review of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the 23rd session of the General Assembly and 2) current challenges and forward looking strategies for the advancement and empowerment of women and girls; 50th Session: 27 February – 10 March 2006 focusing on 1) enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, inter alia, the fields of education, health and work and 2) equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels.

UNIFEM/USA representatives have attended the following conferences presented by the Department of Public Information (DPI) in this reporting period: 56th Conference: 8-10 September 2003 entitled "Human Security and Dignity: Fulfilling the Promise of the United Nations", 57th Conference: 8-10 September 2004 entitled "Millennium Development Goals: Civil Society Takes Action", 58th Conference: 7-9 September 2005 entitled "Our Challenge: Voices for Peace, Partnerships and Renewal", 59th Conference: 6-8 September 2006 entitled "Unfinished Business: Effective Partnerships for Human Security and Sustainable Development".

Relative to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), our representatives continue to contact government officials in Washington, D.C. to encourage the United States to sign on.

The United States Committee for UNIFEM remains committed to the support of UNIFEM and to advancement in the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, particularly, but not exclusively, Goal #3 concerning the elimination of gender disparity.